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Cuba: Failure, Credits, Tragedy

No doubt the Cuban invasion of Cuba has been put down. No doubt it was a farce in many ways. No doubt it is open to criticism both as to timing and to numbers. But no doubt the comments and conclusions being drawn in this country and in others are about as hysterical as they can get.

From the beginning the invasion was overplayed, thus accounting for the fact that results are being over emphasized.

From the first day the invasion's most prominent battle was the battle of lies. No one knows for certain yet what actually happened other than the insurgents failed to live up to press notices.

Calling it an "invasion" is a mere matter of terminology rather than fact. At the most there were probably only 1,500 insurgents involved. Castro has at hand 300,000 to 400,000 troops. The defeat of the insurgents falls far short of any great victory under the circumstances. It takes some high-flying propaganda to hang any hero's medal on Cuba's communists for this feat.

And it is time to give the insurgents and their leaders some credit. We doubt if the real intent of the "invasion" has yet been revealed. It is impossible to believe that Cuban exiles or the U.S. expected any major coupe with only 1,500 men. It is impossible to believe they could mount a real invasion in the time they have had. But insurgent leaders must be credited with a steady pressure on Castro, which may be their aim for the moment. And insurgents must be credited with showing the measure of their dedication—it is great big.

No one should be misled by the outcome. The insurgents are not through with Mr. Castro, according to all indications.

However, the Cuban affair has given the hysterical a chance to become hysteric. Even though President Kennedy sent no U.S. military forces

into the fighting, he has, according to the hysterical, suffered a tremendous blow, while the Communist world has gained a gigantic victory. This is primarily propaganda, with no facts to support it.

U.S. intelligence information may have been faulty, but intelligence is a variable thing because what people may be feeling is often considerably different from the way they act. Cubans might well be fed up with Castro, but knowing the drastic techniques used by his regime, they may have been held back by fear.

But something was wrong with the estimate of the situation. This is the one fact open to criticism. There were some substantial credits due the Kennedy administration. The president told Khrushchev to keep his hands off Cuba in fine fashion, and Adlai Stevenson did an equally fine job of telling off the Cuban UN representative.

The major credit, however, came in what Kennedy had to tell Latin American nations. He said the U.S. will act quickly and alone to block further Communist penetration of the western hemisphere if members of the inter-American alliance try to hide behind excuses. And he made it plain that it is their security which is in direct peril.

Thus the Cuban affair was not as bleak as the hysterical and the propagandists believe.

But it does have its tragic side—the Cuban people. Either way they turn for the moment they are at the point of a gun. Their lives, their families, and their property are at stake. These people, who revolted against Batista to gain freedom and got Castro and Communism, have suffered the real blow. They may well suffer more before the Cuban issue is settled.

Yes, the real tragedy is borne by the Cuban people.